

---

## Chapter 3:

# Where to Get Assistance

Many government and private organizations assist landowners with wetlands stewardship by providing technical expertise, financial assistance, education or information, and project planning direction. However, many serve a particular land-use clientele or address a particular wetland function exclusively. For example, the Natural Resource Conservation Service works mostly with the agricultural community, while the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife focuses on habitat-related issues.

This chapter describes the agencies and organizations that work with landowners in activities related to wetlands stewardship. These include:

- Agencies (federal and state)
- Citizens groups
- Conservation Districts
- Cooperative Extension
- Foundations and Corporations
- Land Trusts
- Local Governments
- Tribal Governments
- Watershed Teams



These agencies are described in the summaries that follow:

## **Agencies: Federal and State**

### ***United States***

Army Corps of Engineers  
Bureau of Land Management  
Environmental Protection Agency  
Farm Service Agency  
Fish and Wildlife Service  
Forest Service  
National Park Service  
Natural Resources Conservation Service

### ***Washington State***

Conservation Commission  
Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation  
Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development  
Department of Ecology  
Department of Fish and Wildlife  
Department of Natural Resources  
Department of Transportation  
Parks and Recreation Commission  
Puget Sound Water Quality Action Team



# **U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps)**

## **Description**

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has been in existence since 1775. It is one of the world's largest engineering and construction organizations. While the commander of each Corps district is an Army officer, the overwhelming majority of its workers are civilians. The Corps has three primary missions that include: military construction (such as barracks and training areas), civil works (such as flood control and navigation), as well as support for other federal agencies (such as EPA's Superfund program). In past years environmental programs within the organization have increased, with emphasis placed on hazardous waste cleanup and habitat restoration.

The Corps is organized by district offices. Activities in most of Washington are handled in the Seattle office. (The Portland district handles activities in SW Washington and the Walla Walla district handles activities in SE Washington.) In addition to engineers, the Corps employs biologists, archaeologists, planners, hydrologists and other professions to handle its diverse responsibilities.

## **Stewardship Programs**

- **Ecosystem Restoration – Section 209-** the Corps conducts ecosystem restoration at the watershed scale, recommends actions to be taken to resolve water and related land resource problems, and implements projects.
- **Planning Assistance to States - Section 22** - the Corps works with sponsoring groups to develop comprehensive plans that address a wide range of issues including water quality, fish and wildlife habitat and erosion problems.
- **Section 206** – Provides for aquatic ecosystem restoration and protection if the project improves the quality of the environment and is in the public interest.
- **Section 1135 of the Water Resources Development Act** – authorizes the Corps to modify the structure or operation of a past Corps project to restore fish and wildlife habitat.

## **Other Wetland Activities**

- Regulatory authority for Section 404 of the Clean Water Act and Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act
- Navigation
- Flood Control





## **U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM)**

### **Description**

The Bureau of Land Management is responsible for the balanced management of public lands and resources and their various values. Management is based upon the principles of multiple use and sustained yield, that takes into account the long term needs of future generations for renewable and non-renewable resources. These resources include recreation, range, timber, minerals, watershed, fish and wildlife, wilderness, and natural, scenic, scientific and cultural values.

### **Stewardship Programs**

- **BLM Challenge Cost Share Program** - restoration, enhancement, protection and management of habitat is done through property exchanges, acquisitions, and restoration projects. Partnerships among government agencies and private interest groups are the focus of the program; technical assistance and small cost share funds are available.

### **Other Wetland Activities**

- Management of publicly owned lands including wetlands.





# U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

---

## Description

The Environmental Protection Agency is responsible for assuring that the Clean Water Act provisions are implemented through regulatory and non-regulatory programs. The Agency's mandate under the Clean Water Act is to protect, maintain and restore the Nation's Waters. This is done through: state delegated permit authority; supporting development of water quality protection programs through funding to states and tribes; and through technical and financial assistance.

The EPA has adopted an ecosystems and watershed-based approach to implement its environmental protection mandates. Where wetlands and other aquatic ecosystems are concerned this means integrating regulatory and non-regulatory tools to minimize impacts to aquatic ecosystems and critical areas. EPA actively supports the development of information, projects, programs, training and educational tools that can be used by states, tribes, local governments, landowners and citizens to improve protection of aquatic ecosystems.

## Stewardship Programs

- **Five Star Restoration Challenge Grants** – modest financial assistance is provided to support community-based wetland and riparian restoration projects, to build partnerships, and to foster local natural resource stewardship.
- **Nonpoint Water Quality – Clean Water Act – Section 319 Grants** – funds are provided to non-federal agency groups, tribes and non-profits to manage pollution and improve water quality. (This program is managed in cooperation with the Washington Department of Ecology).
- **State/Tribal/Local Wetland Planning Grant Program** - assistance is provided to state agencies, tribes, and local governments for watershed planning and the development of technical tools for protecting and restoring wetlands
- **Tribal Assistance Grant** - grants are given for administration of environmental regulatory programs and development of other environmental protection programs on tribal lands.



- **Urban Resources Partnership** - sets up partnerships with government agencies, non-profit organizations and community groups to protect, improve and rehabilitate critical urban environments. Small grants are available. (Natural Resources Conservation Service is a partner in this program)
  - **Wetland Protection, Restoration, and Stewardship Discretionary Funds** - small grants are provided that support implementation of Section 404 of the Clean Water Act for wetlands training, outreach, education and sediment management issues.
- 
- Review and issuance of Clean Water Act Section 404 permits
  - Wetlands Delineation training (in cooperation with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers)
  - National Estuary Program
  - Environmental Education Grants

## **Other Wetland Activities**





# **U.S. Farm Service Agency (FSA)**

---

## **Description**

The Farm Service Agency, under the U.S. Department of Agriculture, administers farm commodity, crop insurance, and conservation programs for farmers and provides loans for farm ownership and farm operations. FSA programs are primarily directed at agriculture producers or in the case of loans, at those with farming experience. Farmers apply for programs and loans at county or consolidated county offices, see Appendix C-1.

## **Stewardship Programs**

- **Conservation Easement Program** – Farmers Home Administration (FHA) borrowers can cancel a portion of their indebtedness by placing a conservation easement on part of their property. Easements are accepted on highly sensitive lands for the purpose of conservation, wildlife habitat protection, and recreation.
- **Conservation Reserve Program** - designed to conserve natural resources by returning cropland to trees or permanent vegetative cover to enhance long-term environmental and wildlife benefits.
- **Environmental Quality Incentive Program** - financial and technical assistance is available for farmers and ranchers to undertake conservation practices on their land, particularly those related to water quality improvements. (Natural Resource Conservation Service is a partner in this program)

## **Other Wetland Activities**

- “Sodbuster” - new conversions of highly erodible lands are required to have a conservation plan
- “Swampbuster” - discourages conversions of wetland acreage to agricultural lands





# **U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)**

## **Description**

The Fish and Wildlife Service works to conserve, protect and enhance fish and wildlife and their habitats for the benefit of the American people. Primary resource responsibilities of the agency include migratory birds, threatened and endangered species, inter-jurisdictional fisheries and the habitat upon which they depend. Because of these responsibilities, the agency is committed and active in promoting wetlands stewardship.

## **Stewardship Programs**

- **Chehalis Fisheries Restoration Program** - funding is available for restoration of salmon habitat in the Chehalis River Basin.
- **Habitat Conservation Planning** – a voluntary planning option for private landowners to develop conservation plans to protect threatened or endangered species while conducting their land-use activities. Used to advance permit authorizations.
- **Jobs in the Woods** - funding and limited technical assistance is provided to non-federal government entities to restore watershed functions while providing local employment in communities affected by the reduction in the timber industry. (The US Forest Service is a partner in this program)
- **National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grants** - state agencies that administer acquisition programs in coastal areas can obtain funding for the purchase or restoration of critical wetland habitat.
- **National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grants: Evaluation Grants** – monitoring funds used to evaluate the effectiveness of granted projects for improving conservation actions.
- **National Wildlife Refuge Challenge Cost Share Program** - limited financial and technical assistance is provided to agricultural landowners for enhancing wetlands, riparian areas or other critical habitat.
- **North American Wetlands Conservation Grants** - these grants foster partnerships to acquire, restore, enhance and manage wetlands, especially those most important for migratory birds. Large grants, small grants, and evaluation grants are available.



- **Partners for Fish and Wildlife** - technical and financial assistance is given to private landowners for restoration of wetlands, riparian areas and other critical habitats.
- **Puget Sound Program** - state, tribal and local governments develop partnerships with the USFWS to protect and restore coastal habitat in Puget Sound, with an emphasis on wetlands.
- **Washington State Ecosystem Conservation Program** - assistance is given to restore and enhance degraded or impacted wetlands, riparian and upland habitats on private lands. A program priority is restoring wetlands by reestablishing historic hydrologic conditions.

- Administers the Endangered Species Program
- Federal aid for Sport fish and Wildlife Restoration
- Administers the Migratory Bird Conservation Fund
- Review of the Clean Water Act, Section 404 permits (with US Army Corps of Engineers and the Environmental Protection Agency)

## **Other Wetland Activities**



## USDA Forest Service (USFS)

---

### Description

The Forest Service protects and manages National Forests and Grasslands. In addition, they also provide technical and financial assistance to State and private forest owners, encourage good stewardship and land management on forest and grasslands, help states and communities to wisely use forests to promote rural economic development and a quality rural environment, and provide training and education.

### Stewardship Programs

- **Forest Legacy Program** - identifies and protects important forest lands from development by acquiring conservation easements or making occasional purchases. Continued timber management, improved water quality and maintained or enhanced fish and wildlife habitat are the goals of the program. (Washington Department of Natural Resources is a partner in this program)
- **Forest Stewardship and Stewardship Incentive Programs** - these two companion programs provide technical and financial assistance to non-industrial private forest owners to encourage the long-term stewardship of their lands and assist them with active management. The programs include practices for the protection and restoration of forest wetlands. (Washington Department of Natural Resources delivers this program.)
- **Jobs in the Woods** - funding and limited technical assistance is provided to non-federal government entities to restore watershed functions while providing local employment in communities affected by the reduction in the timber industry. (The US Fish and Wildlife Service is a partner in this program)
- **National Wild and Scenic Rivers Program** - provides assistance for developing comprehensive river management plans to protect and enhance river values for selected rivers (or segments of rivers). Some technical assistance is possible and limited funding for acquisition of property is available.



- Manage 12 million acres of wetlands and riparian ecosystems nationwide
- Develop and implement forest management plans that contain specific standards and guidelines for protection of riparian areas and wetlands
- Restore habitat and hydrologic functions of degraded wetland ecosystems on Forest Service property
- Administer a land acquisition program to protect wetlands and other significant ecosystems
- Conduct research on forested wetlands

## **Other Wetland Activities**



## National Park Service

---

### Description

The National Park Service was established to promote the use of national parks, monuments, and other federal lands. The Park Service conserves the scenery, the natural and historic objects, and the wildlife within its boundaries to provide for the enjoyment of those resources for present and future generations. In addition, the Park Service provides conservation assistance to local communities for lands outside federal ownership.

### Stewardship Programs

- **Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program** - provides planning and design assistance to communities for protection of valued areas such as greenways, trails, river corridors, scenic areas and open space.

### Other Wetland Activities

- Administers the Land and Water Conservation Fund with the Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation







# U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

---

*(Formerly the Soil Conservation Service)*

## Description

The Natural Resources Conservation Service is a branch of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. They help individuals, groups, organizations, and governments voluntarily conserve natural resources on private land. They assist land users and communities with conservation planning and applying conservation approaches that benefit natural resources and protect water quality. The NRCS provides technical, and in some cases, financial assistance for stewardship activities. The agency works closely with conservation districts, local governments, and private landowners to help prioritize local natural resource needs.

## Stewardship Programs

- **Environmental Quality Incentive Program** - financial and technical assistance is available for farmers and ranchers to undertake conservation practices on their land, particularly those related to water quality improvements. (Farm Service Agency is a partner in this program)
- **Northwest Salmon Initiative** - interagency teams develop watershed restoration plans focusing on ways to improve salmon habitat. Technical assistance and small grants are available for implementation.
- **Plant Materials Program** - this research program develops cost-effective vegetative solutions for soil and water conservation problems. Native plants are collected, evaluated and propagated; and limited technical assistance with large revegetation sites is provided.
- **Resource Conservation and Development Program** - helps communities develop rural economies by improving and conserving local natural resources. The NRCS provides coordination for efforts that may include wetlands protection, flood plain management, and habitat restoration projects. No grants are available.



- **NRCS Technical Assistance Program** - provides on-the-ground technical assistance to landowners, groups, state and local governments to inventory natural resources and apply conservation practices needed to protect and enhance those resources.
  - **Urban Resources Partnership** - sets up partnerships with government agencies, non-profit organizations and community groups to implement natural resource projects in urban areas. Small grants are available.
  - **Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Program** - provides assistance to non-federal governments and some non-profit organizations for planning and implementing watershed projects that address flood prevention, water quality improvement, agricultural management, and fish and wildlife habitat.
  - **Wetlands Reserve Program** - offers agricultural landowners an opportunity to receive payments for restoring and protecting wetlands. Provides cost-share funds for restoration and the purchase of conservation easements.
  - **Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program** – provides technical and financial assistance to enhance priority fish and wildlife habitat in areas that have been impacted by agricultural activities. Provides cost-share funds for enhancing priority habitats: estuaries, wetlands, riparian habitat, shrub-steppe, and oak woodlands.
- 
- Regulatory authority for wetlands determinations in agricultural areas
  - Soil Survey Program
  - Natural Resources Inventory
  - “Sodbuster” - new conversion of highly erodible lands are required to have a conservation plan
  - “Swampbuster” - discourages conversions of wetland acreage to agricultural lands

## Other Wetland Activities



# Washington State Conservation Commission

---

## Description

The sole purpose of the Commission is to provide administrative support to the network of local Conservation Districts. Districts are subdivisions of state government that are run by five-member volunteer boards of supervisors who direct local solutions to natural resource conservation problems. The Commission coordinates district programs statewide to prevent duplication and to promote cost effective use of funding. They disseminate conservation information and support technical training to local Conservation Districts.

## Stewardship Programs

- **Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program** – a voluntary program to restore riparian areas for salmon habitat by contracting with agricultural landowners to protect and restore buffers along streams.
- **Northwest Emergency Assistance Program** - this federal grant program is provided through the Conservation District offices to employ crews of displaced Salmon Fishermen. It conducts watershed surveys and implements projects in cooperation with private landowners which increase and protect fish habitat. Due to the broad variability among conservation districts, no program description is included in Chapter 4.
- **Water Quality Implementation Grants Program** - provides grants to Conservation District offices to increase the level of direct technical assistance and education programs for private landowners. This program can produce holistic watershed management plans, site specific resource management plans, and cost share incentives to landowners. Each conservation district determines priorities for distribution of these funds, therefore no program description is included in Chapter 4.

## Other Wetland Activities

- Provide information and training to Conservation District staff





## Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation (IAC)

---

### Description

The Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation supports the development of outdoor recreation and habitat conservation in the state. The IAC has guided the investment of nearly \$550 million in over 3,300 projects throughout the state for parks, trails, water access sites, wildlife habitat, and natural areas. Although best known for its grant programs, IAC also provides technical assistance, planning, coordination and advocacy on outdoor recreation and natural resource issues.

The Committee consists of eight members composed of three state agency directors and five citizens appointed by the Governor. IAC also commonly refers to the small state agency which serves the Committee.

### Stewardship Programs

- **Salmon Recovery Funding** – provides competitive grants for habitat preservation and restoration projects and related programs and activities that contribute to salmon habitat recovery. Project funds may be used for acquisition of real property in fee or less-than-fee, as well as restoration efforts.
- **Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program** - provides grants to state agencies or municipal subdivisions of the state (cities, towns, counties, port districts, etc.) and Native American tribes for the acquisition of conservation lands and development of recreation areas, including critical habitats such as wetlands.

### Other Wetland Activities

- Administers the Land and Water Conservation Fund (with the National Park Service)
- Establishes the State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP)





# Washington State Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development (CTED)

---

## Description

The Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development provides technical and financial assistance to communities in Washington to help them build strong social, environmental and economic foundations. CTED's programs are often directed at the entrepreneurial components of local communities, offering diverse assistance ranging from growth management support to advise to businesses.

The Agency works on natural resource issues focusing on growth management services. Staff train and assist local jurisdictions to produce new or update existing comprehensive land use plans, and development regulations or special area ordinances (including Wetland Ordinances). Block grants can be provided as incentives to some of these activities. In addition, the agency has a mediation service to help local governments resolve disputes over resource protection versus growth issues such as regional transportation or water resources issues.

CTED has offices in Seattle, Olympia, and Spokane.

## Stewardship Programs

- None.

## Other Wetland Activities

- Assist local governments in developing programs that protect or restore wetlands
- Grants for development of wetlands protection ordinances, land banking strategies, or other innovative techniques to restore or protect wetlands
- Assist local governments in resolving natural resource or other land use conflicts







# Washington State Department of Ecology

---

## Description

Ecology's role is to protect, preserve and enhance the environment and promote the wise management of air, land, and water for the benefit of current and future generations. The agency has many responsibilities including issuing permits for water, air and waste discharges. Technical and financial assistance is also provided to industry, landowners and local governments.

Ecology carries out its wetland responsibilities using a number of non-regulatory and regulatory approaches. Staff also assist local governments in planning and administration of local wetland protection programs.

## Stewardship Programs

- **Aquatic Weeds Management Fund** – provides grants and loans to local governments to manage the invasion of non-native aquatic plants.
- **Centennial Clean Water Fund** - provides grants to local agencies to improve water quality resulting from either point or non-point discharges. The fund supports restoration, enhancement and education.
- **Coastal Protection Fund** - uses resource remediation funds to restore and enhance natural resources damaged by oil spills.
- **Coastal Protection Fund: Terry Husseman Account** – uses water quality penalties from violations to conduct natural resource restoration projects that benefit water quality and habitat.
- **Coastal Zone Management - Local Government Grants** - awards grants to local governments in 15 counties for shoreline planning, public access, preservation, restoration, and environmental education.
- **Flood Control Assistance Account** - provides funds to local governments to minimize flood hazards through the use of structural and non-structural solutions including land use regulations, bioengineering, sediment control, etc. To achieve flood hazard reduction, wetland acquisition and restoration are encouraged.



- **Model Toxic Clean-up Act** - provides funds and technical assistance to clean up and restore habitat damaged by the release of toxic wastes.
- **Nonpoint Water Quality - Clean Water Act - Section 319 Fund** - provides grants to non-federal agencies, tribes, and non-profits to manage non-point pollution and improve water quality. (US Environmental Protection Agency is a partner in this program).
- **Puget Sound Wetlands Restoration Program** - conducts a full assessment of watersheds to identify the best wetlands for restoration that will address watershed-based problems. Technical assistance is provided to landowners to implement restoration on priority sites.
- **Washington State Conservation Corps** – provides a labor force in the form of Conservation Corps youth crews who conduct watershed restoration work and other physical improvements to the environment.
- **Washington State Water Pollution Control Revolving Fund** - provides loans to local governments for water quality improvement projects, including wetlands acquisition in estuarine areas, enhancement, restoration, and education.
- **Washington State Watershed Grants** – provides funding and technical assistance to local communities for watershed planning to address water supply issues, and optionally - water quality and habitat. Offers funds for watershed assessment and planning in the entire watershed unit.

- Issuance of Clean Water Act 401 Certifications
- Joint administrative responsibilities with local government in Shoreline Management Act policy development, permitting and enforcement
- Technical assistance for wetlands critical area protection under the Growth Management Act
- JARPA and Watershed Restoration Permit assistance at the Permit Center
- Educational materials (books, displays, videos, pamphlets) on wetlands
- Stewardship information for preservation and restoration of wetlands in local communities

## Other Wetland Activities



# Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW)

---

## Description

The State Department of Fish and Wildlife preserves, protects and perpetuates the state's fish and wildlife resources and maximizes the public beneficial use without impairing those resources. This is done through securing, maintaining and enhancing diverse habitats and the species that live in them. The WDFW is committed to the preservation and maintenance of wetlands.

While wetlands comprise approximately 5% of the landscape in Washington state, they provide primary habitat and/or feeding habitat for 85% of the terrestrial vertebrate species. Wetlands provide very high fish and wildlife species diversity and densities. When wetlands are lost, population reductions occur not only in what are termed "wetland-associated species" but other species as well.

## Stewardship Programs

- **Migratory Waterfowl Artwork Program** - provides small grants to private landowners or non-profit organizations for waterfowl enhancement or restoration projects and implementation of best management practices. The program also provides funds for acquisition of WDFW properties.
- **Regional Fisheries Enhancement Groups** - small grants are available to local teams in selected areas to evaluate problems and implement solutions for increasing fish habitat. Work is done on private lands with landowner involvement, volunteers and agency staff.
- **Upland Wildlife Restoration** - long-term agreements are developed with landowners for habitat improvements and public access on private lands. Materials and construction costs are covered by the program. Wetland buffers (and infrequently wetlands) may be included.
- **Volunteer Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Enhancement Program** - assists volunteer organizations in fish and wildlife habitat enhancement, including wetlands restoration. Work is done on private property with materials and construction cost paid by the program.



- Regulatory authority for Hydraulic Permit issuance
- Administration of the State Endangered Species Act
- Technical support for Growth Management Act and Sensitive Area Ordinance development and implementation on habitat issues
- Input provided through the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act for federally funded or permitted projects related to habitat and species protection
- Provides educational materials on habitat such as wetlands and the species that live within them

## **Other Wetland Activities**



# Washington State

## Department of Natural Resources (DNR)

---

### Description

The Department of Natural Resources manages over 5 million acres of forest, agricultural, aquatic, and other state trust lands; natural area preserves; natural resource conservation areas; and recreational sites. The agency provides wildfire protection, oversees forestry activities, and monitors forest health conditions on 12 million acres of state and private lands. DNR also serves as the state's geology agency and provides urban forestry assistance to communities and forest stewardship assistance to non-industrial private landowners.

DNR staff provide technical assistance regarding leases of state-owned aquatic lands, that are used for a variety of purposes from aquaculture to private recreational docks. Staff consult with landowners on issues such as contaminated sediment clean-up and disposal, near-shore habitat inventories, and harbor area planning.

### Stewardship Programs

- **Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account** - grants provided to local and state governments and tribes to increase public recreation, restore habitat, shoreline access, protection and other public benefits associated with aquatic lands. Funds are available for land acquisition and development of public access facilities along shorelines.
- **Forest Legacy Program** - identifies and protects important forest lands from development by acquiring conservation easements or making occasional purchases. Continued timber management, improved water quality and maintained or enhanced fish and wildlife habitat are goals of the program. (U.S. Forest Service is a partner in this program)
- **Forest Stewardship and Stewardship Incentive Programs** - two companion programs that provide technical and financial assistance to non-industrial forest owners to better manage their lands through restoration and best management practices. (U.S. Forest Service is partner in this program)
- **Jobs for the Environment** - employs displaced natural resource workers by awarding grants to conduct watershed restoration activities which improve fish and wildlife habitat. (US Forest Service and US Fish and Wildlife Service are partners in this program)



- Administration of the State Forest Practices Act
- Administration of the Natural Heritage Program
- Acquires and manages natural resource lands, including wetlands through the Aquatic Lands Program, Natural Area Preserves and Natural Resource Conservation Areas Programs
- Manages state trust lands to support education in the state

## **Other Wetland Activities**



# Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT)

---

## Description

The Department of Transportation is responsible for providing transportation facilities and services for the citizens of Washington State. They seek to offer safe, efficient and environmentally responsible services but sometimes unavoidable impacts to wetlands and other aquatic resources occur. Department policy requires the agency to replace resources lost as a result of state transportation projects. This is often accomplished by restoring historic wetlands or enhancing degraded wetlands, streams and riparian areas.

## Stewardship Programs

- **WSDOT's Wetlands Mitigation Program** - restores or enhances wetlands on private land to compensate for wetlands lost as a result of state transportation projects. Full cost of design, construction and monitoring is paid by the agency.

## Other Wetland Activities

- Wetlands Monitoring Program
- Wetland Banking Program
- Watershed Pilot Program







# Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission

---

## Description

The Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission acquires, operates, enhances, and protects a diverse system of recreation, cultural, historic, and natural sites. The Commission fosters outdoor recreation and education statewide to provide enjoyment and enrichment for Washington citizens. Many of the more than 250 properties under the Commission's management contain wetlands. The Commission is charged with protecting, enhancing, and interpreting the natural history of Washington State.

## Stewardship Programs

- **Washington State's Scenic River System** - designates and manages key scenic rivers in Washington, forms local support groups, and works to secure the "scenic" values of these rivers. (No program description in Chapter 4).

## Other Wetland Activities

- Provides for the interpretation and preservation of wetlands on lands owned by Parks
- Can protect targeted sensitive areas threatened by commercial development through acquisition efforts





# Puget Sound Water Quality Action Team (PSWQAT)

---

*(formerly Puget Sound Water Quality Authority)*

## Description

The Puget Sound Water Quality Action Team was created to lead state and local efforts to protect and restore the biological health and diversity of Puget Sound. The Action Team coordinates a strategy through biennial work plans that defines state and local actions for accomplishing the goals of the Puget Sound Water Quality Management Plan.

The Puget Sound Plan calls upon local, state and federal agencies and tribes to protect wetlands and fish and wildlife habitat from the effects of pollution and growth. The strategy recommends aggressively protecting wetlands and aquatic habitats through strong critical areas ordinances, and non-regulatory programs that include acquisition, education and restoration and creative land-use policies.

## Stewardship Programs

- None.

## Other Wetland Activities

- Assistance for the development of local wetlands and aquatic habitat protection programs
- Public Involvement and Education (PIE) grants





## *Success Story:* **Preservation, Restoration and Management**

### **Smick Meadows Wetland**

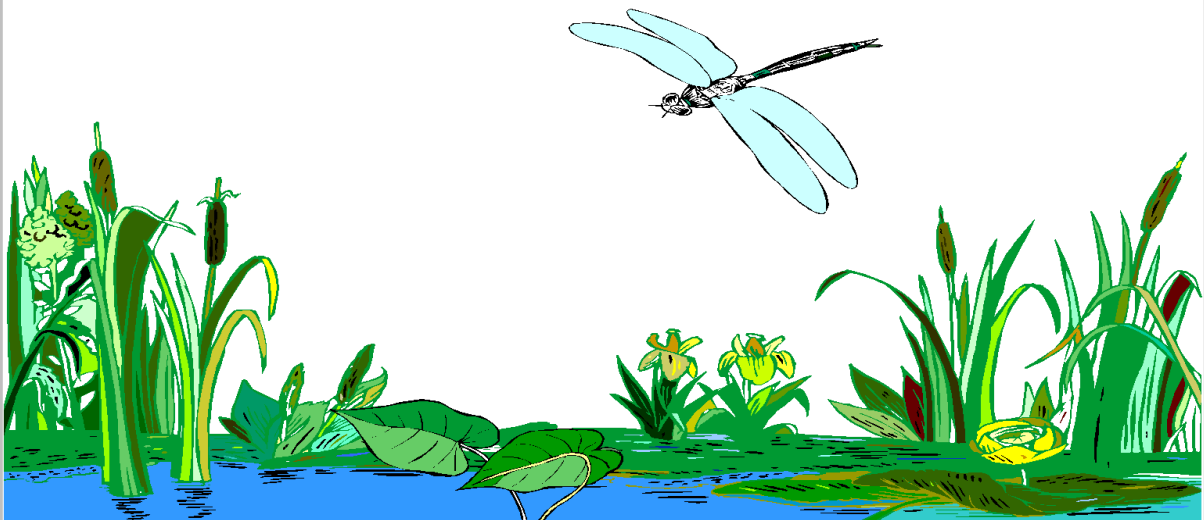
In the late 1800's much of the arid country of eastern Washington was available for homesteading. While a large portion of this land was considered too dry to be hospitable, the area fringing the ponderosa pines, about 35 miles southwest of Spokane, was well-watered with patches of deep and fertile soils. Early settlers found this area to be particularly diverse, with the mixed conifer forest to the north, the shrub-steppe of the channeled scablands to the west, and the grasslands of the Palouse to the southeast.

Where these three ecosystems converged, the locale took on the characteristics of each and its diversity attracted rich and varied

wildlife and plant communities. In addition, a maze of ponds, meadows and wetlands drew waterfowl, shorebirds and a variety of other resident and transient species to the area.

One of the earliest settlers in the area was the Smick family. They homesteaded a small farm at the heart of this "blended ecosystem". As was the custom at the time, a large wetland on this farm was drained to plant hay and grain crops. This practice continued until 1993 when the owners approached the U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM) about possible acquisition of the ranch to protect it from the pressures of development. Eventually the ranch was purchased using Land and Water Conservation Funds, and transferred to public ownership under the BLM.

The site was named Smick Meadow after



the early pioneers who settled on this land. Soon after the acquisition, biologists recognized the site as a drained wetland and developed a plan to restore the hay meadow to a functioning wetland. Unique and significant habitats were identified and mapped and protective measures for the wetland were initiated.

Work on site began in 1995 and already the land is partly restored. It consists of approximately 60 acres of open water. As the shoreline cover reestablishes, prime nesting and foraging habitat for waterfowl and shorebirds is returning. The wetland is healing itself in many ways. Aquatic plants are naturally recolonizing the marsh and other wetland species are beginning to flourish. Monitoring of the area has shown marked increase in bird species richness and diversity over the last two years.

The Fishtrap Management area, the larger BLM managed area in which Smick Meadow is located, is still grazed by cattle under a short term lease back agreement. Grazing is intensively managed to prevent damage to the recovery of the wetland and other natural resources such as water quality, soils, or plant communities. Fences have been erected to limit livestock access and wetland plants have been introduced on the site.

Currently the area is open to the public. Local schools are using the site for outdoor recreation purposes. Wildlife viewing facilities are being planned and the old homestead will be renovated for educational purposes. Over the next 2-3 years, the site will be monitored to determine recovery rates for various wetland system elements.

The western shoreline will have a small wildlife viewing platform and boardwalk developed under the BLM Watchable Wildlife program. The project is still in progress. Only \$50,000 has been spent for materials and staff time so far to install fencing and planting or seeding of native vegetation.

Many organizations and agencies joined together to restore this area including: the Rocky Mtn. Elk Foundation, Ducks Unlimited, Inland Wildlife Council, Spokane Audubon, Pheasants Forever, Cheney School District, US Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife.

*For more information about this site or the restoration project contact Lou Jurs, Bureau of Land Management, at (509) 536-1200*

## Citizens Groups and Collaborative Efforts

Besides the land trusts discussed later in this chapter, there are some key organizations and associations whose efforts and special programs support wetlands stewardship. The following is a brief description of four citizen's groups whose work in wetlands stewardship is worth special notice (descriptions of programs mentioned, where relevant, are included in chapter 4). These are not the only groups working diligently on this issue. For more information about citizens groups and watershed activists, review the directories and contact lists in the appendices.

**The Audubon Society** actively supports protection of critical habitats such as wetlands. Many of the 26 local chapters have wetlands projects in place.

The Seattle Chapter has established the **Washington Wetlands Network, known as WETNET**. WETNET's goal is to prevent wetland loss by networking citizens and organizations. WETNET has actively supported protection measures for wetlands at the local government level and has provided education and information to local citizens and communities regarding regulatory and stewardship options through workshops, training, and technical assistance (WETNET publications are listed in Appendix B).

WETNET's current protection efforts promote enrollment in the King County Open Space Current Use Taxation Program by providing landowners with information workshops and application assistance. They have also started the Watershed Community Link (WCL), in cooperation with WSU Cooperative Extension, King County Surface Water, and Adopt-a-Beach. WCL trains citizen volunteers in wetland monitoring, wetlands issues, and the importance of wetlands, in exchange for a year of their volunteer labor monitoring wetlands.

**Ducks Unlimited** is known for their interest in protecting waterfowl habitat areas. Their goal is to maintain and recover waterfowl habitat areas for use as habitat and as a recreational resource. Ducks Unlimited's MARSH Program offers funds to agencies and organizations interested in wetland habitat restoration. They also supply technical expertise to facilitate habitat recovery.



## **Pacific Coast Joint Venture and Intermountain West Joint Venture**

are international and interstate public-private partnerships created to implement the goals of the North American Waterfowl Management Plan (NAWMP). The NAWMP is a 1986 treaty with Canada and Mexico to restore waterfowl populations along migratory corridors in North America. Thirteen habitat joint ventures are currently active in North America, essentially along major migratory flyways. Joint ventures coordinate and focus public and private efforts to identify, protect, restore, and enhance critical wetlands and associated waterfowl habitat. The Pacific Coast Joint Venture (PCJV) operates in coastal British Columbia, Washington, Oregon, and northern California. The Intermountain West Joint Venture (IWJV) operates in eastern Washington and ten other western states.

In Washington, PCJV and IWJV partners include The Nature Conservancy, Ducks Unlimited, National Audubon Society, Washington Duck Hunters, Trumpeter Swan Society, Washington Wildlife Federation, Defenders of Wildlife, Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission, and the Yakima and Colville Indian Tribes. Participating public agencies include the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Reclamation, Corps of Engineers, and the Washington Departments of Fish and Wildlife, Natural Resources, and Ecology.

Many, if not most, of the lands of interest to the PCJV are wetlands. The PCJV adapted a strategic plan in 1992, and a similar plan is currently under development for the eastern Washington component of the IWJV. The planning process has identified eleven “focus areas” statewide where joint venture partners are collaborating to secure funding and complete on-the-ground habitat projects. The PCJV participates in a project called “Barley for the Birds,” where poco barley is provided to cooperating farmers as a winter cover crop and important food source for migrating ducks, geese, and swans.

Two federal grant programs, the North American Wetlands Conservation Act Grants, and the National Coastal Wetland Conservation Grants (see Chapter 4) are administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service through the Pacific Coast and Intermountain West Joint Ventures.





**Washington Wildlife and Recreation Coalition (WWRC)**

is a broad-based coalition of groups and individual with a long-range goal of securing continued funding for the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP). WWRP funding is appropriated by the Washington Legislature and is Washington's primary source of state grant funding available to state agencies and local governments to acquire land for wildlife habitat conservation (including wetlands) and outdoor recreation (including state and local parks). The program is administered by the Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation. WWRC works actively with the Legislature, public agencies, and citizen sponsors to secure funding and implement spending of WWRP funds. Citizen support for and participation in the Coalition's program is essential to securing continued funding.

**See Appendix C-3 for contact information on organizations.**



## Conservation Districts

Conservation Districts (CDs) work with local landowners to provide technical assistance and cost sharing, as well as information and education about stewarding lands. CDs are legal subdivisions of state government that administer programs to conserve natural resources. There is a network of 48 CDs in Washington.

CDs are self-governed at the community level by a five-member (elected & appointed) board of volunteers who establish priorities and set policy for the district. Essentially, conservation districts are a grass roots conservation delivery system for identifying problems and guiding voluntary solutions. Grants and some locally matched state general funds are used to implement projects.

The Districts are supported by the Washington Conservation Commission, a small state agency that administers the grant programs and provides training. CDs also work in close partnership with the technical and engineering staff of the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), a federal agency with a similar mission, to help owners conserve natural resources on private lands. CDs and the NRCS often work out of the same office to better coordinate their efforts.

CDs provide free technical assistance, frequently on the application of best management practices, like advising farmers on correcting agricultural nonpoint pollution. Restoring wetlands, or creating new ones, may be a part of this. When working on watershed enhancement projects to protect endangered salmon, they advise how to protect riparian and wetland areas and apply bioengineering techniques.

Conservation district staff work with rural landowners to develop **“conservation or resource protection” plans** required by many of the wetlands conservation programs in the Farm Bill, including the Conservation Reserve Program, the Wetlands Reserve Program, the Environmental Quality Incentives Program, and others. Landowners that develop these plans and implement approved conservation practices can become eligible for many cost-sharing and payment assistance programs. They may also become eligible for property tax exemptions on improvements to their property when these improvements benefit fish and wildlife habitat, water quality, or water quantity under new 1997 state legislation.



Districts also sponsor, or help support, special programs such as the Budd/Deschutes GREEN (Global Rivers Environmental Education Network). As participants in this program, students and citizens are mobilized to learn about and address problems in watersheds, such as water quality and quantity issues and protection of fish and wildlife habitat. Volunteers in the community are engaged in a variety of environmental monitoring efforts and conduct action projects such as stream clean-up and restoration efforts.

**See the “Index of County Level Contacts” (Appendix C-1) for a listing of conservation district offices by county.**



## Cooperative Extensions

The Washington State University Cooperative Extension Service has offices in all 39 counties. Faculty of Cooperative Extension conduct informal educational programs in the areas of agriculture and natural resources, family living, community resource development, and 4-H. Some of the conservation oriented education programs they provide include: agricultural BMPs, the role of wetlands in water quality, agricultural engineering, wildlife and fisheries management, and forestry and rangeland management.

The county-based offices are staffed with faculty of varying backgrounds. Offices are supported by campus and research station specialists who work with them to develop local programs. They also work closely with conservation districts, providing the most current scientific information on best management practices.

Many of the county offices support groups of volunteers trained in specific fields. Some of these volunteer groups include Water Watchers, Beach Watchers, Watershed Masters, Bay Watchers, Land & Water Stewards, etc. Volunteers receive a number of hours (generally 60-80 hours) of training on water quality and other issues, in exchange for an equal or great number of community service hours providing educational outreach to the public. These volunteers will conduct monitoring, do clean-ups, and generally help to maintain natural resource areas.

**See the “Index of County Level Contacts” (Appendix C-1) for a listing of cooperative extension offices by county.**



## Foundations and Corporations

A number of national and regional foundations provide grants to organizations and individuals for environmental and educational projects. Many corporations and local companies also have their own “giving” programs, which make grants to worthy environmental, educational, and social service projects.

While the focus is usually on community service and public resources, there are situations where private landowners might be considered for grants. One situation might be when a landowner wants to take special measures to protect critical wetland habitat on their property. Another might be when private lands would be used to promote research or education for students. Chances of getting a grant are often improved if the proposed project involves multiple owners or demonstrates partnerships with conservation groups or government agencies.

Eligibility requirements, application procedures, visibility, and funds vary widely among foundations and corporations. For more information on foundation grants and corporate giving programs:

**1) Consult the reference section of the local library.** Most libraries have access to directories of foundations and corporate funding programs. Two of the most well-know directories are:

Directory of Environmental Grantmaking Foundations  
P.O. Box 22770  
Rochester, NY 14692  
1-800-724-1857

Pacific Northwest Grant Makers Forum  
1305 Fourth Avenue, Suite 214  
Seattle, WA 98101  
206-624-9899

**2) Contact businesses in the local community.** Most companies are interested in projects that improve their own communities and benefit their own employees. Most are also looking for appropriate credit and visibility. If you know an employee of a particular business, ask them to help you identify the right decision maker in the company to have a personal conversation with regarding the proposal.



## Land Trusts

**Land trusts are usually locally-based non-profit organizations** directly involved in protecting important land resources for the public benefit. Land trusts form when grass-root citizen interest is sparked to protect community open space values. Thus land trusts depend on the financial support, volunteer assistance, and participation of the people in the community. Many locally based land trusts are small and are run solely by volunteers, while national land trusts may have professional staff.

Land trusts are not “trusts” in the legal sense. In fact, many refer to themselves as conservancies, foundations, or associations. Land trusts often offer quick response, flexibility, and confidentiality, and are friendly providers of preservation assistance.

**Land trusts protect a range of different resources**, from greenways to farmland to open space. They protect land that has natural, recreational, scenic, historic, cultural, scientific and educational, or productive value, depending on the needs of the community. Many protect wetlands as their highest priority.

**Land trusts protect land permanently and directly.** They can be the official “holder” of a conservation easement, taking on the responsibility of overseeing, managing, and enforcing the land restrictions. They also directly own land.

**The hallmark of land trusts is their direct involvement in land transactions.** Almost all land trusts offer technical assistance to landowners to preserve quality natural resources. They use a variety of flexible and creative conservation methods that achieve conservation goals while meeting the specific needs of the community and landowner. Some common tools/techniques are: the acceptance of donations, securing of conservation easements, and outright purchase or bargain sales.

**There are many benefits landowners might expect from conveying all or some of the interests in their land to a land trust.** These include: direct compensation, income tax deductions for donations, and lowered property and estate taxes. The process of working out an agreeable transaction may also provide landowners with a better understanding of their real estate rights and a plan for managing their estates. To many, the satisfaction of knowing that the wetlands they restored or protected will be left undisturbed is reward enough.



**Land trusts are not adversarial**, but work cooperatively with landowners and government agencies. Therefore, trusts can lead community efforts to preserve open space by working with local residents and officials to strengthen planning and zoning regulations and non-regulatory protection of sensitive areas.

**National land trusts** are larger organizations and provide major support in a number of important areas.

- **River Network** is an organization focused on protecting and restoring rivers and watersheds throughout the country. They work with citizens to develop watershed organizations that promote protection. They also acquire and preserve river-lands that provide critical services such as water supply, flood attenuation, and habitat.
- **The American Farmland Trust** is a national trust that works to preserve the most critical agricultural lands (these lands may include wetlands as well).
- **The Land Trust Alliance** is an umbrella group based in Washington, D.C. that serves as a network for all the country's trusts, providing education, training, and technical assistance.
- **The Nature Conservancy** is an international membership organization focused on protecting ecologically significant lands and waters. It owns and manages more than 1,600 preserves in the U.S. While The Nature Conservancy has the resources to buy outstanding natural areas for preservation, it also works with a wide range of individual and agency partners to assist in the acquisition and/or cooperative management of significant natural lands.
- **The Trust for Public Land** specializes as an intermediary between private landowners and government or non-profit agencies to engineer land preservation. They make purchases and exchange properties to preserve key natural features.

**See the “Index of County Level Contacts” (Appendix C-1) for a list of land trusts by county.** The land trust directory (**Appendix C-4**) offers a brief synopsis of Washington land trusts at the local, regional, and national levels. For other information on land trusts or a list of land trusts throughout the country, contact The Land Trust Alliance (phone 202-638-4725).







## *Success Story:* **Urban Preservation**

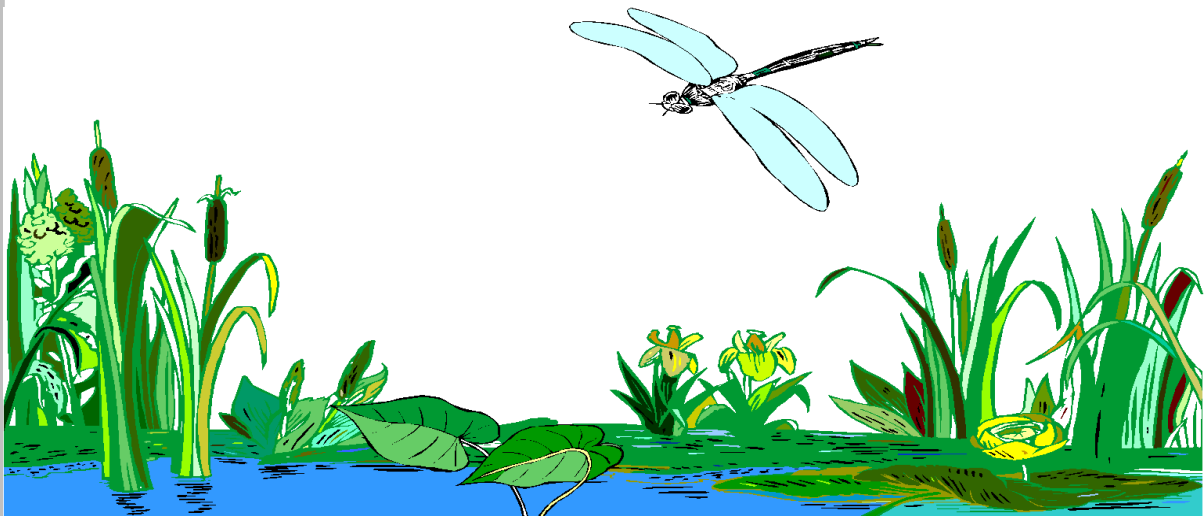
### **Preserving Saddle Swamp**

The recent preservation of Saddle Swamp is an example of how a partnership between local government, progressive corporations and a community-based land conservancy can preserve an extraordinary wetland. The development of the 230-unit “Beaverdam” housing project with an 18-hole golf course at one time could have meant the heart-breaking loss for the pristine nature of Saddle Swamp. However, because of the commitment and innovation of the people and organizations involved, this time the story is different. The development in fact has become the economic engine to support the preservation and stewardship of the wetland in an otherwise urbanizing environment.

The wetland and surrounding habitat totaling 116 acres includes class 1 wetlands

consisting of shrub, deep marsh and open water subclasses. This urban treasure enjoys an abundance of wildlife and waterfowl, providing the habitat to support many of the birds and mammals that visit nearby neighborhoods. A vital link in the wildlife corridor between Lake Sammamish and the Issaquah Alps, the wetland is home to blue heron, beaver, deer and a palette of northwest wildflowers.

The story of the preservation of Saddle Swamp begins in the early 1990’s with the action of two citizens, Fred and Ann Weinmann, who assisted King County Office of Open Space in applying for a Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP) grant to purchase the wetland. The Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation (IAC) approved a \$1 million allocation to the purchase, which was to be matched with a substantial donation of the property by its owner, Quadrant Corporation. As negotiations



progressed, however, the County became concerned whether it would have the resources not only to purchase the wetland, but also to provide for its long-term stewardship. At this point the County invited the Land Conservancy of Seattle and King County to lead in the design of the program that would both save the wetland and provide for the stewardship of its critical natural functions.

The Land Conservancy of Seattle and King County negotiated a model agreement with the community leaders, the county and the wetland landowners, Taiyo American and Quadrant Corporations. "Behind each of the party's particular needs we found the overriding desire to protect and steward this valuable asset," said Jerry Henry, the Conservancy President. Here's the detail of how The Land Conservancy did it:

- ❖ The Corporate owners donated the wetland to The Land Conservancy.
- ❖ In order to ensure maintenance of the wetland (through an annuity fund) and to provide access to the public, the Land Conservancy sold a conservation easement to King County. The purchase of the easement was funded with part of the funding originally allocated by the IAC (\$260,000).

- ❖ In addition, Quadrant and Taiyo agreed to bolster the long-term care of the wetland through substantial annual contributions to the Conservancy's dedicated Saddle Swamp stewardship fund.
- ❖ The Conservancy, as the owner of the land, will serve as the wetland's primary steward, with active consultation from King County government and the surrounding community.

Everyone won in the Saddle Swamp preservation, especially Saddle Swamp! Through this unique solution, the wetland will be well cared for, duck nesting boxes will be provided along with other enhancements to the site's already excellent wildlife habitat, and the public will enjoy nature trails with a viewing platform. Larry Phillips, King County Council member, says, "Saddle Swamp is a model for future preservation of natural resources threatened by expanding urbanization".

With far less money than was originally allocated by the IAC, not only is the site preserved, but its permanent stewardship has also been funded. Peter Orser, Quadrant Senior Vice President, predicts that the stewardship arrangement will serve as a model for future Quadrant residential communities.

*For more information about this project, contact Gene Duvernoy at (206) 324-8021.*

## Local Governments

The role of local governments is to provide for the welfare of the community. Meeting the public's needs for health, safety, and economic livelihood are key components of community vitality. As a broader understanding of wetlands functions becomes known, local governments are expanding their participation in stewardship. Complementing regulatory programs with stewardship better meets the resource protection needs of the community.

**Local governments have the most flexibility to provide stewardship programs** and opportunities for landowners, of any government body in Washington. Decision makers on local planning commissions and councils are highly responsive to their vocal constituents. Therefore, influencing the development or modification of stewardship programs is most effective in one's own community: at the level of city and county government.

**In Washington, there are a number of enhanced stewardship opportunities that are exclusive options of local governments.** Along with applying land-use designations to direct community growth, local governments can provide several voluntary stewardship opportunities including: 1) property tax incentives, 2) funding mechanisms and programs for stewardship, 3) restoration and enhancement projects or community stewardship programs, and 4) regulatory-based conservation incentives. (See **Table 5: Local Government Programs/Options that follows, for a breakdown of counties implementing some of these opportunities.**)

### 1) Property tax incentive

#### ***Open space current use taxation (CUT)***

CUT programs offer a reduction in property taxes on private lands when the current open space amenities on these lands, such as wetlands, are deemed of community benefit and thus, are worth the tax incentive to retain them in their natural state. A "public benefit rating system" (PBRs) can be applied to help the local government determine which applications are appropriate for classification and what level of tax relief they should receive. (Refer to the "stewardship techniques" section of chapter 2 for more details on CUT Programs.)

The table of Local Government Programs lists those counties that have established a PBRs. Although some counties have not established a PBRs and/or received any enrollment applications



(and thus have not officially enacted the “open” open-space provision), none-the-less, the opportunity is available in all Washington counties. A landowner has only to apply to engage a review for enrollment.

If the property is not designated as open space in the county Comprehensive Plan, or if a PBRs is established, a public hearing is required at which the local legislative body makes a determination regarding classification. Thus, application to enroll in the program is made to the legislative authority of the county in which the property is located. **Contact the local land-use planning or assessor’s office.**

## **2) Funding mechanisms and programs for stewardship**

### ***Conservation Futures***

The state Current Use Taxation law [RCW 84.34, Section 200] also provides authority for local governments to raise funds for open space preservation through purchase of easements, development rights, or outright acquisition. Counties are authorized to levy a property tax of up to \$0.0625 per \$1000 assessed valuation. This levy is enacted by a vote of the legislative body. These funds may be credited to a special conservation futures fund and accumulated funds may then be used to acquire interest in conservation lands as authorized by the statute.

Counties applying this authority usually refer to their acquisition programs as **Conservation Futures Programs**. These are usually **administered by county parks and recreation departments**. Most have a set of criteria developed for selecting properties for purchase and/or participate in a community nomination process on a periodic basis. If a landowner with valued wetlands were interested in approaching the county for sale, donation, or the holding of an easement, they could contact the local parks department.

Counties in Washington with conservation futures levies supporting active preservation programs are: Clark, Ferry, Island, King, Kitsap, Pierce, San Juan, Snohomish, Spokane, Thurston, and Whatcom. **Refer to the List of County Level Contacts (Appendix C-1) for parks department contact numbers.**



### ***Real Estate Excise Tax (REET)***

REET is a provision under RCW 82.46.070 (1990) which allows counties to impose a real estate excise tax on transfers of property where the proceeds from the tax are used exclusively for the fee-simple or less-than-fee acquisition, and maintenance of conservation areas. Conservation areas are defined as “land and water that has environmental, agricultural, aesthetic, cultural, scientific, scenic, or low-intensity recreational values” and includes open space, wetlands, marshes, aquifer recharge areas, shoreline areas, natural areas, and other lands and waters that are important to preserve flora and fauna” (RCW 36.32.5700).

There are two ways for the excise tax to be initiated, either by resolution of the county legislative body or by public petition. In both cases, a majority of voters in the county must approve the enactment of the tax, including a specified time period and a maximum rate. A plan for the expenditure of the funds must be prepared and adopted by the county. San Juan is the only county in Washington that has successfully adopted the REET.

Administration of the program is conducted exclusively by the San Juan County Land Bank.

### ***Capital Improvement Programs (CIP)***

Counties can levy a property tax to pay for flood hazard reduction to water resource protection projects ranging from acquisition and restoration of wetlands and riparian systems to storm sewer systems. Some counties, like Pierce County’s Rivers Improvement Program, focus CIP funds on acquiring and restoring 100-year floodplains to reduce maintenance costs and flood hazard. The program can help pay for larger restoration projects identified within individual basin management plans.

In King County, however, water resource protection efforts include some funds to small grass-roots projects sponsored by environmental groups or neighborhood associations. **Contact the local public works department’s storm water or surface water management division for information** about availability, program focus, and potential for landowner stewardship linkages.



### 3) Restoration/enhancement projects and community stewardship programs

#### ***Restoration and enhancement projects***

Some counties are beginning to engage in non-compensatory wetlands restoration and enhancement projects. The wetlands chosen are usually important areas for flood attenuation, water quality enhancement or salmon recovery and are identified in existing management plans or watershed inventories. Often the local public works departments or parks departments spearhead these large-scale projects to return wetland benefits to the watershed and correct costly engineering problems facing the community.

If the landowner has a larger sized degraded wetland site that can serve to address these types of watershed problems, the local government may be interested in becoming involved. Check local floodplains and land use management plans for identification of problem areas, and **contact the local public works or planning department** to determine their interest in working on the project.

#### ***Community stewardship programs***

Many counties and larger cities have active community stewardship programs, such as “stream teams.” These programs enlist volunteers to help address water quality and habitat issues within the jurisdiction. Volunteers may work on monitoring, eradicating noxious weeds, doing revegetation, salmon habitat improvements, etc. **Contact the local public works department’s stormwater or surface water management divisions for details.**

### 4) Regulatory-Based Conservation Incentives

Various types of on-site and off-site density transfers were mentioned in chapter 2. Which of these options might be included in local land-use regulations can be investigated by **contacting the local planning department**. The few communities in Washington that have Transfer of Development Rights programs are: the cities of Bellingham and Bellevue and Island County.



## Innovative Solutions in Urban Areas

The city of Bellingham has been very successful at conserving wetlands over the past five years. In addition to the solutions provided within their wetland ordinance, adopted in December 1991, the city administration has applied creative land-use re-allocations to solve problems and work with citizens, developers, and the environmental community. At the time the ordinance was adopted, the city's wetland inventory included about 1,000 acres of wetlands, roughly 5% of the city's land base. Over the last five years, additional acreage has been annexed with a much higher wetland to upland percentage, resulting in increased pressure on wetlands.

Chris Spens, a Senior Planner with the city since 1990, has found a number of ingenious ways to preserve wetlands. Chris is the city's lead planner on major development projects ranging from large subdivisions and planned unit developments to commercial or light industrial lands and public works projects. Chris recognized that as land is annexed, re-evaluated for future zoning, or considered for project development, numerous opportunities exist to alleviate development conflicts with wetlands.

**Assessment starts by evaluating the extent of the wetland, including adequate buffers, on the parcel or project.** As a general rule on parcels one acre and larger, up to 50% of the property may be covered by wetlands before significant limitations exist; this is especially true for residential areas. For smaller parcels and commercially zoned lands, significant limitations begin to occur at 33% wetland coverage.

**For minor wetland coverages**, site plans can usually be shifted, footprints of buildings modified, height increased in place of horizontal coverage, or zoning variances provided.

**For major wetland coverage**, the following strategies can help:

- **Lot line adjustment** between adjacent parcels to create a more favorable distribution of buildable area.
- **Parcel consolidation** joins several small parcels for the benefit of a larger more flexible site, on which cluster development can be applied, where feasible.
- **Clustered development** consolidates units on the property, but may require a rezone. Rezones, i.e., from industrial to residential, multi, etc. result in similar land value but allow a concentration of more development on less area.
- **Rezone**, usually to commercial or multi-residential, allows equal or greater value to be derived from much less land area, allowing wetlands to be left undeveloped.



## Innovative Solutions in Urban Areas (continued)

- **Rezone modification** requires an open space dedication where previously not required, with a concomitant density bonus on the remainder of the upland.
- **Trading adjacent un-opened right-of-way** for wetlands elsewhere on-site.
- **Acquiring** wetlands as open space or habitat, by greenways or public works departments, for stormwater storage in place of structural alternatives like regional detention facilities, etc.
- **Dedication of wetlands** to satisfy both open space and usable space requirements for residential developments in lieu of actively developed park or recreational facilities.
- **Purchase and restore degraded wetlands** in desired locations for mitigation sites.
- **Preservation as a marketing tool** for certain residential or office park developments to attract consumers who prefer natural settings.
- **Creation of wetlands as landscape enhancement** with ponds/pools to diversify sites and provide water storage for fire suppression in more remote areas, irrigation, and/or habitat.
- **Site-Specific Master Plan areas allowing development transfers**, that result in opportunities as well as restrictions on certain lands.
- **Variances from road standards, zoning setbacks and infrastructure requirements** in exchange for wetland preservation.
- **Update comprehensive plans, capital improvement plans and road plans** to eliminate avoidable impacts. Curve linear roads instead of lots and blocks.
- **Use Planned Unit development when annexing** to identify early where to build and where to preserve.
- **Alternative construction approaches**, such as a house foundation built in a floodplain placed on piles so water can run underneath.
- **Negotiate, trade, and make new rules**, toss out old ones, grant variances, combine development plans, share access, share parking, separate bike lanes and sidewalks from roadways, etc.





**Table 5: Local Government Programs/Options**

County	CUT with PBRs	Conservation Futures Levy Program	Real Estate Excise Tax	Other Preservation Programs	Transfer of Development Rights
Adams					
Asotin					
Benton					
Chelan	Yes				
Clallam	Yes				
Clark		Yes			
Columbia					
Cowlitz	Yes				
Douglas					
Ferry		Yes			
Franklin					
Garfield					
Grant					
Grays Harbor					
Island	(developing)	Yes			Yes
Jefferson	Yes				
King	Yes	Yes		* Wetlands Preservation * Waterways 2000	
Kitsap	Yes	Yes			
Kittitas	Yes				
Klickitat					
Lewis	Yes				
Lincoln					
Mason					
Okanogan	Yes				
Pacific					
Pend Oreille					
Pierce	Yes	Yes			
San Juan	Yes	Yes	Yes	Land Bank	
Skagit					
Skamania					
Snohomish	(developing)	Yes			
Spokane	Yes	Yes			
Stevens					
Thurston	Yes	Yes			Yes
Wahkiakum	(developing)				
Walla Walla					
Whatcom	Yes	Yes			
Whitman					
Yakima	Yes				

Key: CUT = Current Use Taxation  
PBRs = Public Benefit Rating System



## Tribal Governments

Unique opportunities may exist to work with tribal governments on actions to protect and restore wetland and riparian areas of value to salmon and other natural resources. Under the process called “cooperative management” state and tribal leaders recognize they share an interest in, and commitment to, the future health and productivity of fisheries resources.

Under treaty obligations, Washington’s Indian tribes are entitled to the legal right to take fish at all usual and accustomed grounds and stations. They received this right, in exchange for giving up ownership of most of the lands in Washington. With the recent decline in Salmonid species productivity in the Northwest, many tribal nations are actively engaged, both inside and outside reservation lands, with salmon habitat recovery.

Tribal treaty rights extend beyond reservation boundaries, so many tribes work with others in the watershed community to help meet the growing need for habitat protection through stewardship. Activities within watersheds that improve salmon habitat, such as streamside revegetation, estuarine wetlands restoration, and removal of blocked access to spawning grounds, to name a few, are of interest to tribes to provide for viable Salmonid populations now and into the future.

Tribes offer a unique perspective on the issue of stewardship, both from their historical and cultural heritage as long-time residents of the Washington landscape and also from their strong technical background in fisheries management and habitat protection.

Therefore, when engaging in a conservation or restoration effort, contact the nearest tribe within the local watershed in which the project is located. **Call their environmental division, natural resources department, or fisheries division to make inquiries** regarding their interest and potential to provide help with the project. Recognize that not all tribes have the staff resources to assist, but some do and others are expanding their efforts on this issue. It could be well worth the call to get the special expertise and participation of tribal government.

**See the “Index of County Level Contacts” (Appendix C-1) for a list of the appropriate tribal government to contact.**



## Watershed Councils/ Leads

Geographic based “watershed” efforts have expanded around the state as the number of problems in watersheds expands. As urbanization increases and heavy resource use continue, overall watershed health is declining. Common resource problems in watersheds include: decreased water quality, increased flooding, increased sedimentation and erosion, declining habitat for salmon and wildlife, declining water quantity, and an overall decline in aesthetic and recreational opportunities. Concern for sustainable watershed health has lead to the establishment of watershed-based planning committees or councils composed of government entities and a broad base of the community.

**The watershed leads, lead entities, or councils** role is similar across watersheds. Whether defined by one title or another, these groups are taking the responsibility for one or more of a number of watershed protection and recovery tasks. They may be conducting watershed-wide resource assessments or a River Basin Characterization of processes to gauge the condition of functions such as water quality, water quantity, flood attenuation, and fish and wildlife habitat. They may be developing watershed wide plans to use protection, restoration, and preservation of natural resources to address one or more of these problems. And they may be actively involved in changing the condition of the watershed by working on-the-ground to preserve or restore lands best suited to reclaiming watershed health..

These actions include preserving and/or restoring wetlands and riparian corridors. In more urbanized watersheds or heavily impacted resource areas, mitigation or remediation dollars may be available to assist the recovery work. In addition, there is a growing emphasis on watershed-focused grant programs from state and federal agencies for either planning or implementation. Two of note are the Washington Watershed Grant Program and the Salmon Recovery Fund. (See chapter 4 for program listings.)

There are also several regional non-profit support organization who provide assistance to local communities working on watershed protection and restoration efforts. One of these **For the Sake of the Salmon**, has established itself as an information center to provide technical support, and encourage the formation of local watershed groups dedicated to recovering salmon. They maintain a **comprehensive list of watershed groups in Washington** and a salmon information database on their Worldwide Web site at: <http://www.4sos.org>



**The Rivers Council of Washington** provides a number of services for watershed work. They have developed a program to help local communities establish and train watershed councils. As part of that effort they have worked with pilot councils in the Methow, Green Duwamish, and Skagit rivers. They help to build long-term government support for local voluntary watershed efforts and partner with other groups to build coalitions for change. The Rivers Council originally developed the directory of watershed groups maintained by For the Sake of the Salmon. Their paper copy of the directory can be obtained by contacting the Rivers Council office in Seattle (see Appendix C-3).

**In addition to watershed councils, local non-profit citizens groups are being established in some locations around the state.** Groups like the Chehalis River Council are examples of grass-roots community organizations whose goal is to protect and restore a particular watershed. They support activities that implement existing watershed management plans, ranging from education to technical assistance and financial help. Regional Fisheries Enhancement Groups are another example of non-profit organizations working to protect and restore fish runs in watersheds around the state.

In summary, many alliances are happening, bringing together citizens, non-profits, government agencies, businesses, and other interests to implement watershed protection plans.

When implementing a landowner stewardship project, check out the existing watershed councils, alliances, and non-profit organizations in the watershed, basin, or sub-basin, to identify any potential allies or sources of help. This is where an understanding of the role of the wetland in the watershed can be an asset in getting needed assistance.

**Review the watershed group directories mentioned in this section and/or contact “watershed leads” (see WA Watershed Grant Program description) or “watershed lead entities” (see Salmon Recovery Fund description) to link in with watershed activities. Contact Richard Gersib (360) 407-7259 at Ecology for information about the River Basin Characterization Method.**



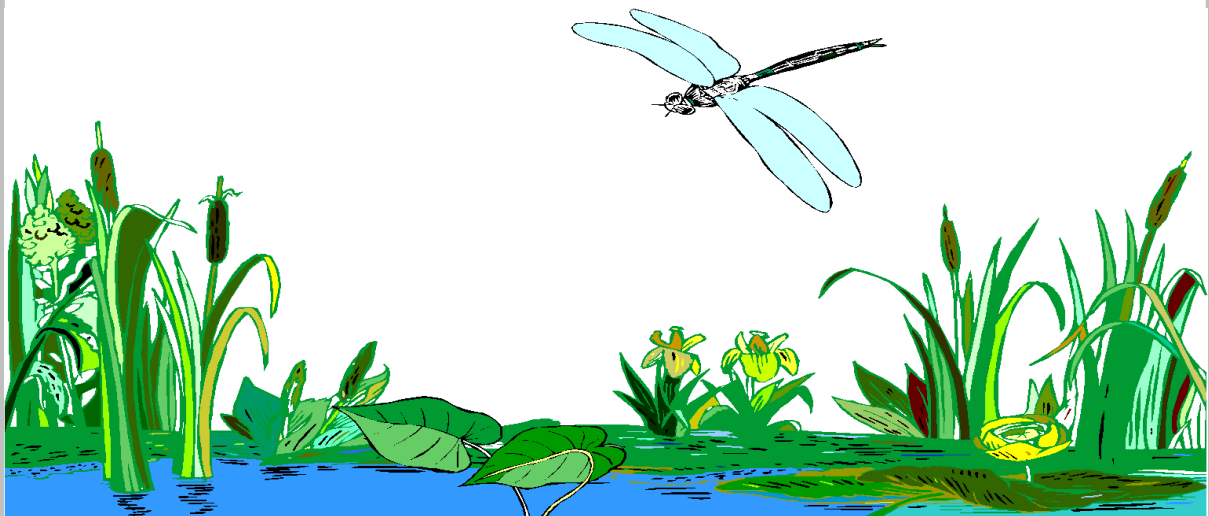
## *Success Story:* **Grassroots Acquisition**

### **Wetlands Lab and Education Center**

Thanks to the tenacity of the Clover Park Technical College staff and local community interest, the first 2 year water quality and wetland technicians training program was established in Washington State. When an 80 plus acre wetland went up for sale, the College ceased the opportunity to purchase an outdoor laboratory and create a new academic curriculum to fill a need in the business community for trained water quality technicians. The Clover Park Technical College in Lakewood (south Tacoma area) worked with local industry, the Lakewood area Chamber of Commerce, the Tahoma Land Conservancy, the Tahoma Audubon Society, State Legislature, and local citizens to purchase the 110 acre parcel. But it didn't happen as might be expected.

In 1991, the 260 acre former Flett Dairy property was offered for sale. Proposals such as a heliport, golf course, housing developments and strip malls were made to the Fuchs Foundation, which was established to handle the estate of Mary and Gottfried Fuchs, the last owners of the Flett Dairy. However, the Foundation wanted several types of land uses on the property and was very supportive of education.

Through a number of public meetings the history of the site and the values of the area were presented. The wetland on the site is an important one. It is a large category II urban wetland that was nominated in 1989 to the Wetlands Preservation List under the Puget Sound Water Quality Plan. The Flett Creek wetland fell short of making the list, but the local community was encouraged to protect the wetland as a locally significant site.



Inspired by the importance of the site, a number of environmental and educational groups stepped forward, expressing interest in maintaining the natural values of the wetland. Among these was Clover Park Technical College (CPTC). Actually, the college had been eyeing the property for several years; thinking about an outdoor laboratory for their fledgling technicians training program in Environmental Sciences and Technology. They needed a field location near the College, and this site was right across the street.

As a first step, a feasibility study was done using Coastal Zone Management grant funding to determine if the site did indeed meet the needs of the college. Determined that the site was their top choice, they applied for assistance to several state grant programs for acquisition funds. Although these attempts were unsuccessful, they did not give up. Instead, they stepped up their campaign and began to talk with their local and state politicians and community leaders.

Presenting the new and much needed technical curriculum as their focus, the college went to the 1993 Legislature and requested funding. Their district senator and representatives were supportive and as a result the College received \$2,750,000 as a line item appropriation to purchase the site as an outdoor environmental lab and education center. Phil Schneider, then chair of the college's Environmental Technician Advisory Committee said, "The outdoor lab will put CPTC in a league of its own in the country when it comes to environmental education; acquisition of the site is not only an exciting prospect because of its usefulness as a learning environment, but also because of its value for wetlands and open space preservation."

Nancy White, of CPTC, was the driving force behind the acquisition. She advises, "people looking for support for their projects shouldn't be discouraged from working with legislators."

Protection of the Flett wetland has not ended with its acquisition. A conservation easement will be placed on the wetland part of the site to preserve it in perpetuity. CPTC stewards the property and uses information gathered in lab testing to assess water quality and health of the site. During the 1996/97 school year, the college will develop an environmental plan for site management and public access/education which will benefit the community, the college, and other students.

*If you have further questions about Clover Park Technical College, the site at Flett Creek, or the environmental education plan, contact Nancy White at (206) 589-5537.*